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LETTER DATED 13 MAY 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

As I indicated in my previous letter to you, I have the honour to refer to the report of the Investigation Commission of the Government of Barbados, which investigated the sabotage of the Cubana aircraft from 28 October to 3 December 1976.

An official delegation of the Government of the United States of America, led by an individual whom the report identifies as Mr. Willis, participated in the Commission's meetings. The interest of the United States of America in participating in the activities of this Commission contradicts that country's claim that it was in no way involved in the act under investigation.

What is more, information and testimony were presented during the investigations concerning the links between Mr. Hernán Ricardo and Mr. Freddy Lugo, then accused of the sabotage, and agencies and officials of the United States of America. A part of the Commission's report, which is contained in the annex to this letter, was devoted to these two men.

I wish to draw your attention to the testimony concerning the contacts which these individuals had with the Embassy of the United States of America in Barbados immediately after perpetrating their vile and cowardly act of sabotage.

Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Lugo spent only a few hours in Barbados, during which time they visited the United States Embassy in Bridgetown, apparently on several occasions, according to the testimony. This matter was examined by the Investigation Commission and, as the Commission stated in its report, "no attempt was made to present evidence to the contrary and no explanation on that visit was offered".

When the Commission met in Barbados, Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Lugo were only suspects. As is well known, a Venezuelan court later found them guilty of having placed the explosives which destroyed the Cuban aircraft, killing 73 persons.

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Immediately after this heinous act, according to the independent testimony of two Barbadian citizens, the saboteurs went directly to the Embassy of the United States of America. This testimony was presented and affirmed in an official and public meeting before representatives of the Washington Government, who were unable to refute it.

Why these "visits" to the United States Embassy? With whom did they meet there? Why has the United States of America never told the truth about these meetings with the saboteurs in its own Embassy?

I believe that the members of the Security Council should demand replies to these questions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ricardo ALARCON DE QUESADA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

[Original: English]

Report of the Investigation Commission, Part II, chapter 8,
"Alleged involvement of the United States" (excerpts from
the conclusions)

The evidence of the alleged participation of the United States in the disaster of October 6 are the statements made to the Chief Superintendent Orville Durant of the Royal Police Force of Barbados by Mr. Dennis Ramdwar, Auxiliary Police Commissioner of the Trinidad and Tobago Police; a note made by Mr. Durant about an English translation of a declaration supposedly made by Freddy Lugo; and the testimony of two taxi drivers who transported Ricardo Lozano and Freddy Lugo at the time they were in Barbados.

According to Mr. Durant's testimony, Mr. Ramdwar said that Lozano had told him that he was a member of the C.I.A. and had made a verbal declaration to him in the strictest confidence; that Lozano had said that during the night of October 6 he had gone three times to see Mr. McLeod at the United States Embassy in Barbados and that Mr. McLeod was a medium-height black man; that on October 18 Lozano had made a drawing with the organization of the C.I.A.; that on October 19 Lozano had requested to see him and that he had told him that he was a member of the C.I.A. and that he had been recruited in Venezuela, and that Freddy Lugo was also a member and had been recruited by him; that Lozano also told him that they left Caracas on October 5 to do an intelligence job on a Cuban flight between Trinidad and Barbados. Mr. Durant said that he had been shown what seemed to be a copy of the drawing made by Lozano.

Mr. Maurice Firebrace, a taxi driver who works out of the Barbados airport stated that he left the airport at about noon time with two male passengers towards Bridgetown.

He stated that he would say that those men were white and he described the clothes they were wearing but when asked whether he was able to recognize them in pictures his answer was negative, saying that he had not been able to take a good look at them. He declared that it was normal for taxi drivers, when the taxi was approaching Bridgetown or entered the city, to ask the passengers what part they wanted to go to in order to drive them as close as possible to it.

Thus, when the taxi was driving along the seawall, he could understand that one of the men said "Embassy" and when he asked what part of Bridgetown they wanted to go to they said "Embassy", "Embassy". The witness said that when the taxi reached Harrison's corner and turned to take up Broad Street, one of them pointed at the building of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce saying that he was going to the Embassy. Mr. Firebrace said that was the building where the United States Embassy was located and further on in his testimony he said that normally when a passenger says "Embassy", taxi drivers

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understand that he means the Embassy of the United States, if another embassy is desired, the passenger will say so. The witness declared that the two passengers got off the taxi in front of the United States Embassy but he could not specify where to or in what direction they went.

Mr. Roger Pilgrim operates his taxi out of the Holiday Inn Hotel and on Wednesday, October 6, between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. two men, one of whom he identified in the picture as Ricardo Lozano, approached him from the entrance of the hotel lobby and told him that they wanted to go to the Embassy of the United States. They got in the back-seat of the car and when the taxi reached Manning store, by the docks, they said they wanted to get off there. They paid and left the taxi and Mr. Pilgrim returned to the Holiday Inn.

According to the testimony given by Mr. Pilgrim, later on that same day, around 4.55 p.m., the same two men asked him to go back to the United States Embassy. He headed to Bridgetown but he could not drive up Broad Street because the road was blocked for the opening of Parliament. Therefore, he left them in the vicinity of the Lawyers Building and drove on. He didn't see what direction they took.

The testimony of Mr. Pilgrim is of a different character. He came to us and submitted himself to questioning. Although he said he didn't see where Ricardo Lozano and Freddy Lugo went when they got off the taxi, the circumstances indicate a visit to the Embassy of the United States. On the second occasion they had asked "to be taken again to the United States Embassy" and were taken to the vicinity. By then it was after 5 o'clock and the stores would have already been closed. Under these circumstances his testimony does support the declarations of the suspects regarding the visits to the United States Embassy.

The testimony of Mr. Firebrace by itself amounts only to a strong suspicion since he could not identify the two men he drove to Bridgetown. However, a conjecture stemming from this testimony is that, according to him, one of the men pointed at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce building and said that he was going to the Embassy. Assuming that that man was Lozano or Lugo, it could be asked, when and under which circumstances had he known about the location of that Embassy?

In our view, a global assessment of the evidence provides some basis for the assertion that Lozano and Lugo visited the Embassy of the United States on October 6. No attempt was made to present evidence to the contrary and no explanation on that visit was offered. Mr. Willis insisted on the fact that, according to Mr. Durant, the investigations did not establish the identity of Mr. McLeod; nobody by that name was working in the United States Embassy; nobody by that name entered Barbados in an official or any other capacity by that time; and no official conclusions were reached regarding the identity of Mr. McLeod. In fact, Mr. Willis referred to this "mysterious Mr. McLeod as if he were as ethereal as implied in his name". We would only make the observation that if any concealed transaction was being made it would not be surprising that a false name would have been used.
